

# STATE OF COLORADO

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Jane E. Norton  
Lieutenant Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **NORTON RALLIES COLORADO AROUND THE STATE'S 708 WAITING CHILDREN AT SECOND ANNUAL ADOPTION EVENT**

*Lt. Governor also Announces the Creation of a Statewide Committee to Promote Adoption*

(Denver) – On Wednesday evening Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Shout Out for Colorado's Waiting Children*, an event organized to promote adoption and raise awareness of an important need for adoptive families in the State of Colorado. The ceremony was held on the West Lawn of the State Capitol where the names of approximately 400 waiting children were called out and candles lit in their honor.

“Colorado has a pressing need to find caring, life-long families for every single one of these deserving children,” said Norton. “Governor Owens and I believe adoption is one of the key areas under our strengthening families initiative. As Coloradans coming together, we can and will make a difference for these waiting children.”

Norton also announced the launch of a newly formed committee in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. The *Committee to Promote Adoption* has been charged with a number of important responsibilities, which include a review of the current system of adoption in Colorado; providing prospective adoptive families with statewide, centralized assistance regarding the adoption process; and to develop a public relations and educational campaign for the promotion of adoption.

As chair of the new committee, Norton announced the appointed members of this statewide effort and spoke on the need to achieve a successful, life-long placement for every one of Colorado's 708 “waiting” children. The official number of children waiting for adoption is determined by the TRAILS Database, which is maintained by the Colorado Department of Human Services.

Members were appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and will serve on the committee for seven months. The first meeting will be scheduled in early December with findings and recommendations due June 30, 2004.

The appointed members of the *Committee to Promote Adoption* are:

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## **Members**

**Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton** – Chair

**Mr. Terry Bagby** – Adoptive Parent and Co-Chair

**The Honorable John Suthers** – United States Attorney for the District of Colorado

**The Honorable Ted Harvey** – Colorado State Representative

**The Honorable David Furman** – Denver District Court Magistrate

**The Honorable Dave Long** – Weld County Commissioner

**Marva Livingston Hammons** – Executive Director for the Colorado Department of Human Services

**Dr. Frank Bennett** – Director of Family Services at Aurora Mental Health Center and adoptive parent

**Dr. Dixie Davis** – Executive Director of The Adoption Exchange

**Elaine Torres** – Manager of Community Affairs for NEWS 4

**Gwen White** – Foster Care Program Director for Lutheran Family Services of Colorado

**Maren Stewart** – Vice President of External Affairs at Children's Hospital and adoptive parent

**Alice Spencer** – Family Resource Coordinator at Access Behavioral Care

**Virginia Appel** – Executive Director for Adoption Alliance

**Marilyn Neihart** – Director of Fort Morgan County Social Services

**Brian Field** – Director of Arapahoe County Social Services

## **Ex-Officio Members**

**Chris Castilian** – Director of the Governor's Office of Policy & Initiatives

**Stephen Heiling** – Deputy Director for the Office of Child and Family Services

**Sandy Blaylock** – Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton

**Mercelle Seale-Pierce** – Communications Associate at Daniels Fund

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